

VZCZCXRO2330  
OO RUEHBC RUEHDE RUEHDIR RUEHKUK  
DE RUEHFR #3733 2501830  
ZNY CCCCC ZZH  
O 071830Z SEP 07 ZDK  
FM AMEMBASSY PARIS  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9971  
INFO RUCNIRA/IRAN COLLECTIVE

C O N F I D E N T I A L PARIS 003733

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 09/07/2017

TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [FR](#) [IR](#)

SUBJECT: FRENCH ELYSEE NEA ADVISER RECOUNTS TOUGH LINE  
TAKEN WITH IRANIANS

REF: PARIS 3668

Classified By: Classified by Polmincouns Josiah Rosenblatt for reasons  
1.4.(b), (d)

¶1. (C) Following up on reftel, Polmincouns and poloff asked French presidential adviser for NEA issues Boris Boillon September 6 about the visit to Tehran by French Presidency official Richier and MFA DAS Gellet. Polmincouns noted the stark phrasing in President Sarkozy's speech to French ambassadors (indicating the world faced the choice between Iran with a bomb or bombing Iran) and wondered what it meant in the context of the visit. Boillon was glad we raised the subject and stated that Sarkozy had wanted to warn Iran in a dramatic and public way that it must cooperate with the international community with respect to its nuclear program or face potential catastrophe in the form of military action. This did not mean, as some media were misinterpreting the statement, that France would be ready to participate in such action. Far from it, Boillon continued; France vigorously opposed a resort to force and preferred to resolve the ongoing dispute diplomatically.

¶2. (C) Boillon echoed much of what MFA DAS Gellet had related in reftel when he observed that the Iranians do not seem to understand the gravity of the situation or France's position. They suffer, he complained, from a closed mindset that he later termed "autistic." Boillon recounted in the same terms as Gellet the origin of the Iranian initiative from Ali Akbar Velayati, foreign affairs adviser to supreme leader Khamenei, to establish a special dialogue between Tehran and Paris. Even before Richier and Gellet traveled, the GOF told the Iranians to "forget it" if their intention was to split France away from the P-5 plus one. Richier and Gellet repeated this message in Tehran and indicated that France might be willing to speak of other subjects (NFI). Boillon believed the level was perfect in that the French sent senior working level officials well below the "political level," whereas Velayati clearly was at the political level. This disparity gave the French considerable leeway in terms of the frankness with which they could speak.

¶3. (C) Boillon repeated that it was clear the Iranians did not understand or accept the blunt message they heard. In his characteristic candor, Richier told Velayati and other Iranian officials that, absent full compliance, sanctions against Iran will only ratchet up. As he previewed the tough line that Sarkozy would express in his speech, Richier added that France wants to avoid military action against Iran but might eventually have to accept it as the only recourse left to the international community to prevent a nuclear-armed Iran.

¶4. (C) Boillon stated that the GOF had not decided whether to continue the dialogue that Richier and Gellet had started. Diplomatic contacts, nevertheless, continue apace, and he pointed to a then current visit to Paris by Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister for European and American Affairs Jalili.

(Note: As reported by a staffer of KM Kouchner September 7, Jalili had inexplicably not been briefed on Richier's and Gellet's message to Velayati. End note) Boillon contended that France had no problem pursuing a diplomatic dialogue per se and kept its embassy in Tehran for just such a reason. As Richier told the Iranians, however, there was no need for a special channel if the Iranian aim was to pry France away from the P-5 plus one. Richier was very direct that France had no intention to deviate from the line it was on with its partners. Boillon expanded his assessment of the Iranians as "autistic like the Syrians. As with the Syrians, one must be direct and not always 'diplomatic.'"

Please visit Paris' Classified Website at:  
<http://www.state.sgov.gov/p/eur/paris/index.cfm>

PEKALA